



Remarks to News Media on the End of the Lewis Prison Standoff
Tuesday, February 3, 2004
Governor's Office
Phoenix, Arizona

Our correctional officers have been returned safely and prison operations are returning to normal at the Lewis prison complex. Now it is time for us determine what happened to allow two prisoners to enter a guard tower and take two correctional officers hostage.

Today I am announcing that I have ordered a thorough review of both the hostage incident and overall operations at the Lewis prison complex. I want to know the predicates that led to the hostage-taking, precise details on how the prisoners were able to take control of the watch tower, and what changes need to take place to ensure this cannot happen again.

This investigation will also examine training, staffing levels, security protocol, and inmate classification at the Lewis complex.

Through this review, we will learn what can be improved at the Lewis complex. But ultimately, this was caused by two thugs in prison who decided to assault Corrections employees and take hostages in a pathetic attempt to secure their own release.

My chief of staff for policy, Dennis Burke, will head the review, and he will work closely with Corrections Director Dora Schriro, rank-and-file Corrections employees, and outside experts as needed to provide a preliminary report within 30 days.

Clearly, something went wrong to cause the hostage situation, and I am confident that Dennis and Director Schriro will provide the answers we need to make the necessary changes.

I hired Director Schriro last summer to provide strong leadership and to the Department of Corrections. She certainly demonstrated that with her skillful management of the hostage situation. I now need her and Dennis to focus on getting to the bottom of what happened at the Lewis complex.

Yesterday was our first day to begin making sense of the hostage situation, and we are working hard and fast to release as much information as possible. That said, I want to be sure that what we release is complete and accurate.

The Department of Corrections is working closely with the Attorney General's Office and the Maricopa County Attorney to determine all the information we can release and to ensure that it is released as soon as possible. I intend to provide as much information as possible without compromising the integrity of ongoing criminal investigations.